

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-50 (canceled)

51-94 (Canceled)

95. (New) A device for ablating stratum corneum epidermidis of skin on the body of a subject, comprising:

a plurality of electrodes, which are adapted to be applied to the skin of the subject at respective points; and

a power source, which is adapted to apply electrical energy between two or more of the plurality of electrodes, to cause ablation of an area of the stratum corneum during a first time period, so as to facilitate passage of a substance through the ablated area during a second time period, subsequent to the first time period,

wherein the power source is adapted to apply an iontophoretic current to drive the substance into the skin.

96. (New) A device according to claim 95, wherein the power source is adapted to apply the electrical energy by generating an electric field which causes an ablating current to flow through the stratum corneum, and wherein the device is adapted to reduce power dissipated in the stratum corneum responsive to variation of a characteristic of the ablating current.

97. (New) A device according to claim 95, wherein the power source is adapted to apply the electrical energy by generating an ablating alternating current, a frequency thereof being above about 100 Hz.

98. (New) A device according to claim 97, wherein the power source is adapted to generate the ablating alternating current such that the frequency is between about 1 kHz and about 300 kHz.

99. (New) A device according to claim 95, wherein the power source is adapted to apply the electrical energy between two of the electrodes at a voltage that is sufficient to cause electrical breakdown of the stratum corneum in less than 50 milliseconds.

100. (New) A device according to claim 95, wherein the power source is adapted to apply the iontophoretic current during a third time period, prior to the first time period.

101. (New) A device according to claim 95, wherein the power source is adapted to apply the iontophoretic current during a third time period, not prior to the first time period.

102. (New) A device according to claim 95, wherein the power source is adapted to apply the iontophoretic current prior to applying the electrical energy.

103. (New) A device for ablating stratum corneum epidermidis of skin on the body of a subject, comprising:

a plurality of electrodes, which are adapted to be applied to the skin of the subject at respective points; and

a power source, which is adapted to apply electrical energy between two or more of the plurality of electrodes, to cause ablation of an area of the stratum corneum during a first time period, so as to facilitate passage of a substance by diffusion through the ablated area during a second time period, subsequent to the first time period.

104. (New) A device according to claim 103, wherein the power source is adapted to generate an electric field which causes a current to flow through the stratum corneum, and wherein the device is adapted to reduce power dissipated in the stratum corneum responsive to variation of a characteristic of the current.

105. (New) A device according to claim 103, wherein the power source is adapted to generate alternating current, a frequency thereof being above about 100 Hz.

106. (New) A device according to claim 105, wherein the power source is adapted to generate the alternating current such that the frequency is between about 1 kHz and about 300 kHz.

107. (New) A method for ablating stratum corneum epidermidis of a subject, comprising:

applying electrical energy between points on the skin, so as to cause ablation of an area of the stratum corneum during a first time period;

applying a drug to the ablated area during a second time period, subsequent to the first time period, so that passage of the drug through the stratum corneum is facilitated by the ablation; and

applying an iontophoretic current to drive the drug into the skin.

108. (New) A method according to claim 107, wherein applying the electrical energy comprises:

generating an electric field which causes an ablating current to flow through the stratum corneum; and

reducing power dissipated in the stratum corneum responsive to variation of a characteristic of the ablating current.

109. (New) A method according to claim 107, wherein applying the electrical energy comprises generating an ablating alternating current, a frequency thereof being above about 100 Hz.

110. (New) A method according to claim 109, wherein generating the ablating alternating current comprises generating the ablating alternating current such that the frequency is between about 1 kHz and about 300 kHz.

111. (New) A method according to claim 107, wherein applying the electrical energy comprises applying the electrical energy at a voltage that is sufficient to cause electrical breakdown of the stratum corneum in less than 50 milliseconds.

112. (New). A method according to claim 107, wherein applying the iontophoretic current comprises applying the iontophoretic current during a third time period, prior to the first time period.

113. (New) A method according to claim 107, wherein applying the iontophoretic current comprises applying the iontophoretic current during a third time period, not prior to the first time period.

114. (New) A method according to claim 107, wherein applying the iontophoretic current comprises applying the iontophoretic current prior to applying the electrical energy.